Research Planning Documents: Projects 1 and 2
[The headings in bold below provide a template or outline for content to be included.]

In addition to the suggested template given below, refer to the following resources when preparing Projects 1 and 2. These resources can be accessed from the class calendar. Print them and keep them handy to refer to as you work on your “research agenda” [Projects 1 & 2] for this class.

- Project descriptions
- Samples of projects submitted in previous classes, especially the ones that are similar to your proposed research in terms of methodology/methodologies used, topic, or other similarity.
- Article(s) describing methodologies, again especially the ones relevant to your proposed research.
- Sample articles from journals illustrating relevant methodologies

As long as you cover the content indicated below, you may vary organization:

1. **Background or Introduction**: Provide context for the problem your research will attempt to solve, including references to relevant literature. **You must have a literature review. To repeat, you must have a literature review that follows the guidelines provided for this course.**
2. **Problem**: Succinctly state the problem that you are trying to solve. The background and/or introduction should “funnel” (from general to specific) into the specific problem that you are trying to solve.
3. **Research Question**: State the research question that you are trying to solve. You need a research question that will help solve the problem.
4. **Hypothesis**: You are stating that question as a hypothesis, a prediction—a more general statement of prediction than that found in the outcomes section below.
5. **Variables**: Important — Discuss variables in terms of participants (selection of subjects), treatments (instruments needed), and criterion (data gathering methods) ….. [For some research methods, you identify important variables in the data, “also called coding—the setting up and labeling of categories, which then become the variables of the study” (CR 26). This identification process also called content analysis.]
6. **Outcomes/ effects**: State what you are studying, by presenting the hypothesis in terms of results expected. **[Hypothesis made specific to research study.]**
7. **Definition of Terms**: Define terms to be specific about what you are studying, quantifying when necessary. For example, be precise about what is meant by “faster” in the sentence “Participants will complete tasks using the tutorial with screen captures faster than using the tutorial consisting of only text.
8. **Subsequent research (ongoing study)**: To demonstrate the complexity of what you are studying, indicate future research that may be needed, research based on what you have studied. This future research, for example, may involve
“controlling” some of the characteristics (independent variables) of the participants in certain types of primary or primary research. This information can be indicated in a separate section or within other sections. See how students incorporated this information in the following samples accessed from the page containing previous submissions: (a) “Ongoing Study” in “Effects of Scannable Design in Educational Web Pages” and (b) “Additional Study” in “Improving Writing Skills of 10th Grade Students.”

9. Design: For Project 1, you provide a brief overview, considering quantitative and/or qualitative research methods. State the methods that you will use to gather data methods such as case studies, etc. For some qualitative research, you may want to use several (at least 3) methods, a research approach called “triangulation.” For Project 2, you develop in detail the design. By combining Projects 1 and 2, you have a complete research plan.

For Project 2, you may revise Project 1 and re-submit along with Project 2. However, note that basically Project 2 develops #9: Design of Project 1.; that is, Project 2 provides the steps to complete your proposed research, as well as the documents that you would need to actually conduct the study. See the items listed in the description of Project 2.

For Project 2, do not worry about having too long a submission, although definitely you do not want to be wordy. Project 1 was to be at least four to five pages; Project 2 can be longer than five pages. Combining the two projects could end up with a project that totals more than eight to ten pages, depending on attachments of items needed to conduct the research study.

You should discuss this work with me face-to-face or voice-to-voice (by phone). You can arrange a time, using email or instant messaging, for us to “talk.”